

# Mc Dougall's Good Stories for Children

## How Little Hugh Carroll Was Trapped in the Magic Cabinet and Taken Away to the Castle of the Four Great Giants

LATE one warm afternoon, but not late enough to think of supper-time, and far, very far from all thoughts of sleeping, Anita and Hugh Carroll sat in the doorway of the big parlor looking out across the porch and the level green lawn down the dusty red road that led to the far-away city. The children had played until they had tired, had drank ice-water until they seemed bursting, and now sat down to wait, with what patience they could summon, until the supper-bell announced that they might rush to the table.

"It's a long time yet," said the boy, who was years younger than Anita. "I really don't think I ever can wait. I wish you would tell me a story; not a very long one, you know, but just enough to make me forget my hunger."

"Anybody would think," said Anita, "that you had eaten nothing for eight or nine days, like the sailors that are shipwrecked. I'll tell you the story about 'em."

"No, indeed, you won't," cried Hugh. "I don't want to hear anything about starving. I want a story about things to eat. Tell me about a witch that turned sticks into pretzels or mud-pies into real ones."

"I have told you often that there are no such things as witches," answered the girl.

"Well, there's fairies," announced the lad, firmly.

"Nope. There ain't any fairies, either; nor elves, nor gnomes, nor ogres, nor nothing," replied the sister, just as decidedly.

"Then what makes the old cabinet move around the parlor?" he asked.

"What do you mean?" inquired the girl in surprise, looking behind her into the darkened room in which they were never allowed to play.

"Something makes the funny tall cabinet over in the corner go sneaking 'round in the dark, just as if it was going to come out here but was afraid to."

### A Strange Old Cabinet

"Tain't movin' now, so you needn't rubber," said Hugh. "But I saw it a minute ago, and once before I saw it, too."

"What a foolish boy," cried Anita. "What makes you tell such stories? A cabinet can't move unless somebody moves it."

"That's why I asked you what does it. It has legs, anyhow."

Anita rose and walked into the parlor, looking carefully at the old rosewood cabinet, which piece of furniture her father had recently bought at an auction and was very much pleased with his bargain still. There certainly was nothing about it to cause one to imagine that it ever moved unless somebody pushed it. Its long, slender, curved legs seemed scarcely strong enough to support it, to say nothing of walking about, and its whole appearance was so venerable and dignified that such a proceeding seemed ridiculous to think of. It was as tall as she, and its seven drawers, each with its antique brass handle, seemed to hint at State papers, old love-letters and wills hidden away within, but she knew that these drawers were filled with photographs and prints.

Anita laughed again. "Perhaps it was afraid 't would get a coat of varnish and be all shiny, like the others," she said.

"I'm glad 'tain't in our room," added Hugh, "for I'd hate to have it hopping 'round us at night, for I'll bet that's what it does."

"What hops around at night?" asked a voice behind them, and both jumped. There stood their mother smiling. When Hugh repeated his statement that he had seen the cabinet move she looked gravely at him and said:

"That's a story, my son, and I have a good mind to punish you for saying such things to your sister. Never tell what you know to be untrue or you will never grow up to be a great lawyer like your dear father."

Hugh stoutly protested that he had told the truth, and insisted that the cabinet had actually moved behind his back as if in mockery even while she was talking. But his mother grew angry, for this she considered merely obstinacy on her son's part, and so when Mr. Carroll came home she reported to him Hugh's astounding fib. At first Mr. Carroll laughed, but when Hugh again asserted that he had seen the ancient piece of furniture actually stride across the room in a stealthy fashion, Mr. Carroll also became angry, for he had a great regard for the truth and nothing pained him so much as hearing an untruth uttered.

### Hugh's Story Was True

After a time he decided to make the little boy sleep in the parlor on the magnificent satin-covered sofa, upon which the children were never allowed to sit, as it was too utterly grand and elegant. Hugh was alarmed at the prospect of spending a whole night there, but he knew that it would be very foolish to attempt to defy his father, and resolved to be as brave as a soldier in battle.

The moonlight came through the lace curtains filtered to a dim mysterious gleam that made a misty diamond-shaped pattern on the carpet, which seemed to move slowly by as the moon sailed through the sky. Sleep, of course, deserted him at once, although he generally sank into a deep slumber almost as soon as he got into his bed.

He lay there watching the softly gleaming reflections from the shining furniture, and soon these gleams began to resemble eyes staring at him out of the dark, but as he was really a very brave boy he got right up and walked directly to the gleaming spot, placed his hand upon it, and so assured himself that it was only his imagination; and that is the thing to do whenever you see anything in a dark room that seems mysterious and forbidding.

With wide-opened eyes he stared, then he heard his papa's step outside, and glancing again at the cabinet saw that it had slipped back to its place in a twinkling.

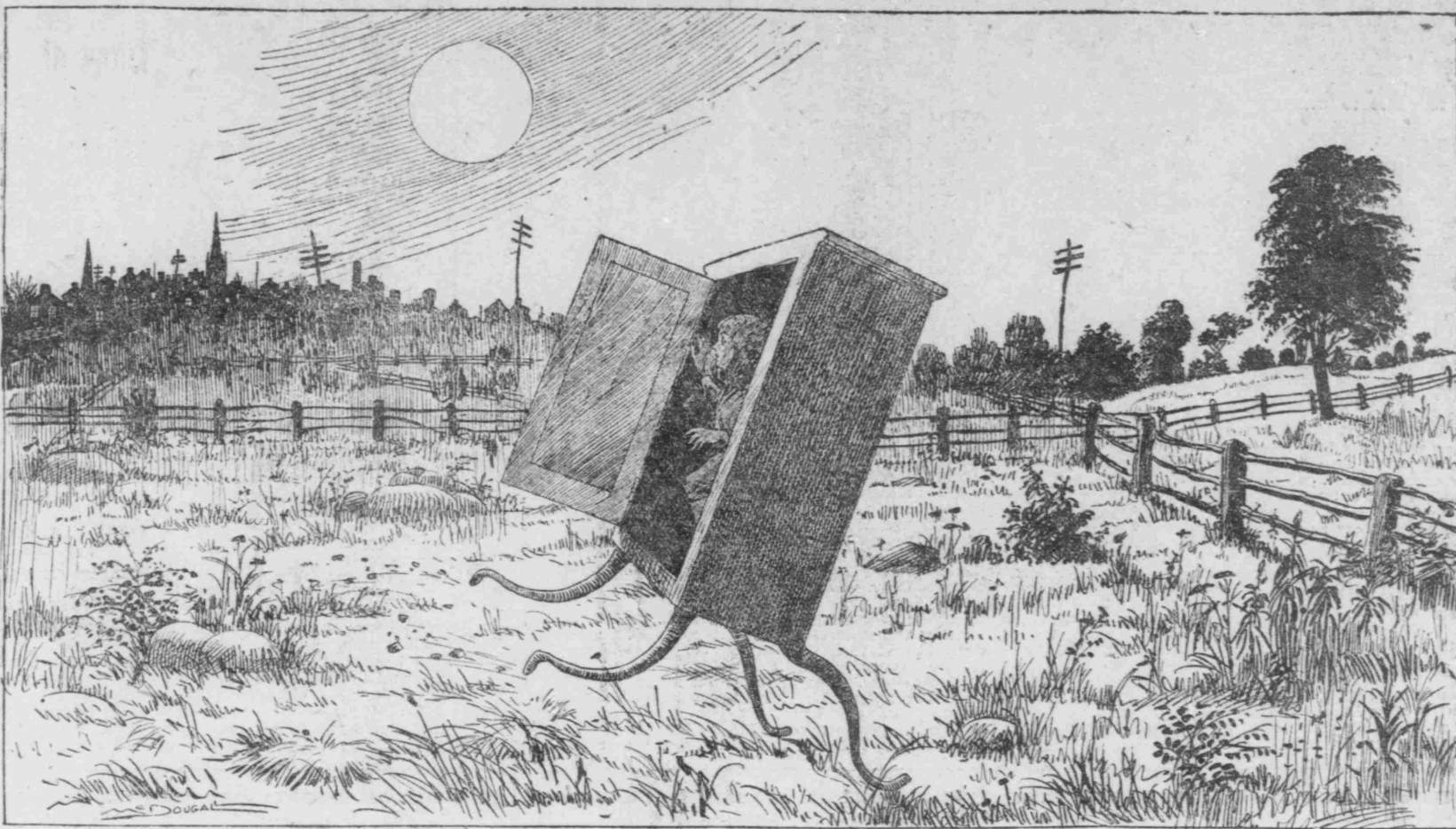
Mr. Carroll lighted the gas and said:

"I think, after all, you have been punished enough. Are you now sorry for telling a falsehood?"

"I never told one!" replied Hugh.

"And besides that, the cabinet moved just now."

His father turned and stared in surprise, for there stood the cabinet with its front turned toward the wall. It had hopped back so quickly that it hadn't time to turn around and face toward the room as before. Mr. Car-



ACROSS THE FIELDS FLEW THE MAGIC CABINET

roll went over to it, and Hugh sprang up and followed. He looked at Hugh and then at the piece of furniture and said:

"Well, well! You couldn't have done it, but how on earth could it get turned about?"

"Did it itself," replied Hugh. "It was over there just now."

"What folly," exclaimed his father, but he stared at the cabinet carefully, for it was certainly too heavy for a child to move and nobody had entered the room. "This is very curious," he added. "There must be, of course, some explanation of such a phenomenon, but I can't discover it."

He looked into a closet and all about the room, examining the windows also, but they were all carefully fastened. He shook his head and asked:

"Now tell me, son, how it happened?"

Hugh insisted that it had walked about the room and returned to the wall of its own volition, but Mr. Carroll was too wise to admit that such a thing was possible, and leading the boy into the dining-room he sat down and said sternly:

"There is some mystery here, and you alone can explain it. Now tell me who has been helping you to play this trick?"

Hugh was about to speak when there was a crash heard in the parlor, and Mr. Carroll sprang into the room, lighted the gas again and stood aghast at beholding a small inlaid table overturned in the middle of the room. The mysterious cabinet stood against the wall, but facing out now and somewhat removed from its usual place.

Mr. Carroll rubbed his forehead and Hugh grinned in delight. Yet even then the man was not to be convinced, so sure are these very persons, that some human hand had not overturned the table and moved the cabinet. He examined both very carefully and finally with an effort turned the cabinet around. He stared in surprise and cried:

### Brave Boy's Experiment

"Why, there's a door in the back of this old thing that I never saw before! I understand now. There is some machinery inside that moves it. We'll soon see what it does."

The door, which was almost as large as the back of the cabinet, was locked, but when Mr. Carroll brought a big bunch of keys of all sizes one was soon found to fit and the door was promptly opened.

Everybody stared into the cabinet's interior, but there was nothing at all in the shallow closet that was revealed, and they saw only the backs of the drawers.

Mr. Carroll replaced the drawers, closed the door and said:

"This thing is beyond me, but I won't give it up yet. To-morrow I will study it out carefully. All of you go to bed while I read a little about magicians' tricks, for this, I am sure, is one of those so-called magic cabinets that we see in the theatres."

"That's just what I thought," cried Hugh. "That's an enchanted cabinet, sure."

"Nonsense! There's some trick, and there's a man—or a boy—behind it all," replied his father, looking keenly at him, for he still suspected him of having a hand in the mystery. However, nothing more was to be done that night, so all went to bed except Mr. Carroll, who sat down to read about conjurers and magic. Toward midnight, there were other sounds heard from the parlor, and running quickly to the door he looked in, and in the darkness saw that all the furniture had been pushed about and everything out of place. Hugh suddenly appeared beside him, for the boy had not slept.

"Let's hide and watch," he whispered. "Perhaps we can see what's doing it."

His father nodded, and then a bright idea entered the lad's mind and he added:

"Suppose I hide inside of the cabinet. I can just about get into that door."

Mr. Carroll admired his son's bravery, for after all this was a feat that few boys would dare attempt after what had happened, and wishing to test his spirit he consented. Hugh slipped within the cabinet and drew the door to. It was dark in there, but he knew that his father was near and had no fear whatever. It makes a great difference when your father stands right by to help if danger threatens, and the worst thing Hugh expected was a short ride around the room, perhaps.

Both kept very still for a long time, and Hugh

was becoming impatient as well as stiff and sleepy, when suddenly he felt a trembling in the wooden walls of the cabinet, a sort of shiver that ran through the frame and also through him as well. He was wide awake in an instant, but nothing followed, and after awhile he again began to feel sleepy. Soon after he heard his father snore softly, and he grinned to think that he was more wakeful than his parent, but the grin quickly altered to another expression as he felt the cabinet suddenly begin to move across the room.

The cabinet moved along and the sensation was like riding in a carriage, or, rather, sailing in a boat, for there was a sort of lurching motion about it, but after a time he began to think it must have walked farther than the length of the parlor, and as it did nothing else he thought it was time to wake his father and let him see the performance, so he called loudly. There was no reply, and then becoming really alarmed he pushed hard upon the door and it flew open.

### In the Giants' Home

Instead of finding himself in the familiar parlor with its carpet of roses he saw wide fields around him, across which the cabinet was running like a frightened rabbit. In the distance tall trees over which the moon was sailing, and far away in the rear, for, of course, he was looking backward as the cabinet ran along, he could see the lights of the city where he lived. The door was swinging to and fro as the cabinet lurched over the uneven ground, and he prepared to jump out, but just as he was ready, slam! came the door and imprisoned him again, for he could not open it, although he pushed with all his strength.

On leaped the animated piece of furniture as if chased by hounds, and for a long time Hugh was kept in the narrow enclosure; but suddenly all motion ceased, and again pushing at the door in desperation, it flew open readily. He found himself in an enormous room, a room as large as his father's whole house, with stone flooring, in the centre of which stood a table, the top of which was high above the tallest man's head, but he could see dishes thereon, cups as large as washbasins and tumblers as big as hogheads, while four immense chairs, with seats as broad as the big satin sofa at home, were placed about it.

Hugh perceived at once that he was in the house of a giant, and counting the chairs and the huge cups on the table he came to the conclusion, as any intelligent boy would, that the giants were four in number.

He now became really alarmed, for what the cabinet purposed in bringing him to this appalling place he could not imagine, but, as he had heard often enough about giants and ogres, he dreaded the worst fate possible, which was to be devoured. Meanwhile the cabinet moved noiselessly about the huge room like a stealthy cat, as if looking for a hiding place, but, suddenly, a loud noise becoming audible, it backed quickly against the wall and stood there rigid.

### An Alarming Dispute

The door did not quite close, and so Hugh, by craning his neck, could just manage to peer out along the wall, and in a moment he saw a tremendous man, fifty feet at least in height, enter the room through the vast door. He was followed a few seconds later by another, and this one shouted in a voice of thunder:

"Hello! Who has brought a plaything? See the baby chest of drawers yonder!"

The first giant rose and took up the cabinet, examining it carefully, but Hugh had the presence of mind to pull the door to and it was never noticed at all, for the giants were looking into the drawers to see what was in them.

"How came this here?" asked the first giant. "Who has presumed to invade our dwelling?"

"Some feeble-witted man, I suppose," replied the second. "He has hidden himself somewhere about the house, I'll warrant. After dinner we'll seek him out, and if he's nice and fat let's eat him for dessert!"

Hugh trembled so that the cabinet shook. He wondered if there was any place in which to hide,

but, reflecting that the giants had not observed the door in the back of the cabinet, decided that he was in the safest place as it was. The giants were already eating and the rattle they made among the dishes was terrific, sounding like the noise of a battle overhead. When they had finished, the first to enter the room pushed his chair back and said:

"Well, Boreas, did you do much damage to-day?"

"Indeed I did," replied Boreas, chuckling. "I shook down a tower that has resisted all my efforts for a hundred years, and tore up that oak forest in Bohemia at which I've been toiling so long, rooting up every tree and making a nice, bare desert there. Oh, I've been busy to-day, I assure you, old Donnerwetter!"

Donnerwetter laughed a great, rumbling roar like thunder and said:

"I suppose you never heard me at all! Nor noticed Blitzen before me either, did you?"

"Oh tut! tut!" exclaimed Boreas. "Who pays any attention to you? Of course, Blitzen does some little damage to property, I'll admit, but what use you are I fail utterly to see!"

"What!" bellowed Donnerwetter; "you dare to say this to me! I, who shake the whole earth!"

"Yes, I say it," returned Boreas, blowing a mighty breath that rocked the cabinet like a boat. "You are merely a big noise-maker, that's all, and can't harm a thing! You are fit only to frighten people and make them crawl under the mattresses. You are simply an accompaniment to Blitzen, the lightning maker, and he isn't so much either, compared to me, Boreas, the wind-raiser."

"Old wind bag!" roared Donnerwetter, striking the table and then, shaking himself, he caused a roll of thunder to echo through the halls of the giants' house that made Hugh tremble. This was followed by a sudden, sharp flash of vivid lightning that illuminated the room brilliantly, and then there entered another giant clad in yellow, who exclaimed:

### The Boy is Discovered

"What! Quarreling as usual! Can't you two keep the peace without forever picking at each other? You are both the noisiest as well as the most useless of beings, and I wonder what you were created for!"

"Oh!" retorted Boreas, sarcastically; "I suppose because you send out a few cheap flashes of lightning and burn down a few haystacks now and then or kill a cow or two, you think you are the whole thing in nature, you bragging old fireworks exhibition! I do more damage in two minutes than you can accomplish in twelve years!"

Now, after hearing all this, Hugh knew that he had been brought into the house of the giants who make the weather. He recognized Blitzen as the disposer of the lightning, Boreas as the wind giant, and Donnerwetter as the one who manages the thunder. Instantly he concluded that the fourth chair was that of the Rain Giant, and he was not mistaken, for, while the three were so bitterly quarreling over their individual importance, there entered another who brought into the room a distinctly damp air. He seated himself and instantly began to mumble:

"Nice lot of brutes!" he growled. "You've left me nothing to eat! While I am busy working, you ate my share as well as your own! I don't see what use any one of you is! A pack of destroyers and trouble makers, that's all! I'd give a good deal if you'd only get at and destroy each other and let the world have some peace!"

Then began a worse uproar than before, as all attacked the rainmaker, whose name, as Hugh soon learned, was Pluvius, with all sorts of abuse, but he seemed very little put out. When they had somewhat quieted, he said:

"Pooh! What are you, after all, but my followers? What good do you do, with all your noise and uproar? Poor, worthless bellowers and ravers, I scorn you one and all!"

Boreas jumped up and sprang at Pluvius with a terrible roar of rage, and in another instant all of the giants were fighting. They rolled about clashing each other by the beard or clothes and the cabinet acted as if alive, skipping this way and that to avoid them, for it would have been crushed at once had even a hand of a giant fallen upon it.

## The Escape of the Prince, Freed by Hugh's Knowledge of the Conjuror's Spell, and Their Automobile Flight

Hugh held the door open a little, ready to leap out if he saw the need, but the cabinet successfully avoided them all. Suddenly Pluvius saw it jumping about and he roared:

"Hi! Look! Brothers! We have a visitor! See the toy cabinet!"

They all ceased their fighting and stared at the cabinet, which instantly darted to the door and ran along the hall with all the giants pursuing. Hugh feared that it was the end, but the cabinet seemed to know the way, and in the darkness it flew like the wind and only stopped when it had reached the top of a tall tower at the far end of the Weather Giants' Castle.

Hugh could hear them searching every cranny below and expecting them every minute to come up the stairs, but he did not notice that the stairway was far too narrow for any of them to ascend it.

"I wonder where I am!" he said, and jumped out of the cabinet to look out of the window. The tower was very tall, and he could see the trees and a river below, and the moon lighted the room so that he could discern all sorts of instruments about it, thermometers, rain gauges, barometers and all manner of things to determine what the weather is or ought to be, and on a table in the centre of the room lay a huge and very imposing book with the moonbeams shining upon its pages. He bent over and read these words:

"And this was the magic charm: 'HOKEM PARAMUS SQUENTIS OBDURAMABUS SISS.'"

He laughed and then repeated the mysterious words aloud just to hear how they would sound:

"Hokem Paramus Squentis Obduramabus Siss! Ha! ha! that sounds like soda water!"

"It has the most lovely sound in all the world to me!" said a voice behind him, and turning he saw a very handsome young man, who smiled at him and added:

### Enchanted Prince's Story

"I am the cabinet, or rather was that interesting piece of furniture until, by uttering those words, you dispelled the charm under which I have been placed for many a long year. I was bewitched by Formosa, the conjuror, who was jealous of me, and who turned me into a wooden article just out of spite, but on this night I was allowed to move about, although on every other night in the year I was simply an immobile piece of furniture of an antique pattern, and only interesting on account of my curved legs. My name is Meteor, and in my own country, which is far away, I am a Prince, but I came here to study the weather in this tower, which was built for that purpose on the corner of the Weather Giants' house."

"Here I became so adept at predicting the changes in the weather that I was appointed official forecaster for all lands, and that's what excited the jealousy of Formosa, who, after all, has no business with the weather, he being merely a stargazer. I suspect he has been using my room, judging from that big book on Magic, which revealed the secret to you, for I never owned it."

"Then, perhaps, he may come back and catch us and turn us both into something!" exclaimed Hugh. "Let's be moving."

"No," said Meteor. "I have a better idea. We will look through his book and find the charm he uses for changing people, and when he returns we'll change him into—well, a wheelbarrow, perhaps."

"No!" exclaimed Hugh. "We'll turn him into a big automobile and ride home on him, for I think we are a dreadful way off."

So they immediately examined the conjuror's book, and soon found the proper charm, which shows how foolish it was for him to leave such a book where other people could read it. In five minutes they had learned it by heart. Then they were ready for the magician, and soon a rustling was heard outside, and in through the window he popped, riding a broomstick.

"Allamus Pollinus opus Disputandum echat Carambo!" shouted Meteor, and added to the words of the charm, which you see was composed of several languages. "Turn into an automobile at once, you old villain, and the best automobile ever seen, too."

There stood a magnificent automobile right in the room.

"Now we've done it!" cried Hugh. "How can we ever get it down from here?"

### Escape in the "Auto"

"I never thought of that," replied Meteor. "What a silly thing to do!"

"But, perhaps," added Hugh, after thinking a minute, "it may be able to get down itself. Let's try it, for, I think the giants are coming nearer from the awful noise they are making." He jumped into the automobile, and Meteor followed. Then Hugh said:

"Go home with us at once."

He hardly expected that the thing would really move, but, to their delight, it flew out of the window and away, for they had demanded the best automobile ever was, and they had got a finished and perfect article, far better than anybody had ever seen before. In three minutes they were standing in front of Hugh's house, and, as it was nearly morning now, they never hesitated about yelling and waking everybody up.

When Mr. Carroll came down and heard Hugh's story, and listened to what Meteor had to say, he was at last convinced, and a more astonished man you never saw.

The Prince remained with them a long time before returning to his home, and they say he fell in love with Anita, and will come back some day and marry her, but I really know nothing about such nonsense.

All I know is that Hugh has a dandy automobile, and he takes me out in it sometimes, for now he is a big boy, and that's how I came to hear the whole story. I wonder where the Giants' house is whenever I think about it, for I'd like to go there myself some time and hear them squabble.

But I'm mighty glad I haven't a live cabinet moving around my room at night.

WALT McDUGALL.

